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NEWS RELEASE

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New Chief Bankruptcy Judge

Effective June 16, 2005, Karen A. Overstreet has assumed the position of Chief Bankruptcy Judge of the U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Western District of Washington. Chief Judge Overstreet succeeds Judge Philip H. Brandt, who has served as Chief Judge since October 2002, and who will continue his term as a bankruptcy judge in the district. Although the Chief Judge typically serves in that capacity for seven years, Judge Brandt stepped aside early to assume the role of Chief Judge of the Ninth Circuit Bankruptcy Appellate Panel. Established in 1979, the Ninth Circuit Bankruptcy Appellate Panel was the first appellate forum in the Country with special expertise in bankruptcy law and it remains the largest bankruptcy appellate panel today.

Chief Judge Overstreet enjoys a distinction few judicial officers can claim: she serves as a bankruptcy judge in the same district in which she previously worked in the Clerk's Office. Between 1977 and 1979 she worked as a file clerk, docket clerk, and courtroom deputy in the Seattle Clerk's Office of the U.S. Bankruptcy Court. After graduating from the University of Oregon Law School and after an accomplished legal career in Seattle and Philadelphia, Chief Judge Overstreet assumed her bankruptcy judgeship in January of 1994.